United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1071
3 February 1992

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General is sending Mr. Amos Wako to Indonesia as his Personal Envoy, to seek clarification about an alleged incident in East Timor on 12 November 1991.

- United Nations Commissioner for Refugees expresses regret about United States decision to repatriate Haitian refugees and concern for their safety.

- Secretary-General lists the 15 countries that have paid in full their contributions to the 1992 regular budget; Member States still owed the United Nations $816,558,111 at the end of 1991.

- Committee on Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy begins its sixth session.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has decided to send Amos Wako, the Attorney-General of Kenya and an international authority on human rights, to Indonesia, as his Personal Envoy, to obtain clarification on the events that occurred in Dili, East Timor, on 12 November last year when, allegedly, Indonesian security forces opened fire on a group of about 1,000 civilians attending a funeral.

Mr. Wako's mission is scheduled to begin on 8 February and last for about a week. He, together with two United Nations officials, will meet with government officials, members of the Indonesian National Commission of Inquiry and others concerned with the incident. He will then report back to the Secretary-General on his findings.

* * *

Sadako Ogata, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), expressed regret today at the decision by the United States Government to resume repatriating Haitians who had been seeking asylum in the United States.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

According to a statement issued by UNHCR, the High Commissioner had sought assurance from the United States Government at "a very high level" that the Haitian refugees would not be forced to return until the situation in Haiti had "evolved positively" and become more stable.

The Haitians, who have been detained at a United States naval base at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, fled their homeland in the months since the democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown in a military coup last year.

The High Commissioner said that continuing reports of serious human rights abuses and acts of violence by the security forces in Haiti gave cause for great concern. There was reason to fear that those forced to return would be exposed to danger, and UNHCR was not in a position to monitor their safety.

* * *

The Secretary-General today issued a list of those Member States which had met their legal obligation to pay their full assessments for the regular 1992 budget by 31 January. They are: Australia, Botswana, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Ghana, Iceland, Ireland, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden. The assessed contributions to the 1992 regular budget total $1,037,471, 596 and all Member States had been requested by the Secretary-General to make their payments in full by 31 January.

In a statement issued by his spokesman, the Secretary-General said that, given the precariousness of the financial situation, the full payments made by the 15 countries were a matter of extreme satisfaction to him.

In addition, 12 Member States, whose regular budget assessments for prior years are fully paid, had made partial payments of their 1992 assessments by 31 January. They are: Austria, Colombia, Dominica, Germany, Hungary, Lesotho, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Swaziland, the United Kingdom and Zaire.

Two new Member States, Estonia and Lithuania, had made advance payments of $5,000 each towards the current regular budget, pending a final decision by the General Assembly as to their rates of assessment.

At the end of 1991, Member States owed the United Nations $816,558,111 in total unpaid assessments for the regular budget and peace-keeping operations.

* * *

(more)

The demand for world energy had accelerated at the same time that global concerns about the environment had intensified, said Antoine Blanca, United Nations Director General for Development and International Economic Cooperation, at the opening meeting of the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy. The sixth session of the Committee is scheduled from today to 14 February.

Mr. Blanca stressed growing concern about the contribution of carbon monoxide to the "greenhouse effect" through the use of fossil fuels and deforestation. He pointed out that energy conservation policies that had promoted new and renewable sources of energy had been scaled down after the 1986 collapse of oil prices and he emphasized the need to strengthen national institutions for renewable energy sources which, he said, could alleviate the demand for conventional energy.

* *** *